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The Message of the  
Brahma Samai

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THE

# Message of the Brahma Samaj

A LECTURE

DELIVERED AT THE

Brahma Mandir, Lahore,

BY

Kashi Ram.

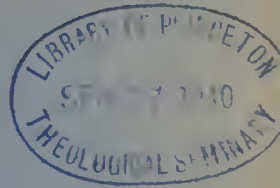


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## THE MESSAGE OF THE BRAHMO SAMAJ.

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Whence cometh this message? Is it a divine message or one which the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj have fabricated—a production of their own fertile brains? The genuineness of a message depends very much on the character of the messengers. Who are the messengers of the glad tidings? What are their credentials? What miracles have they wrought; what supernatural works have they done to establish their claims as the heaven-ordained bearers of this message? Is this message new or a mere revival of the past, a repetition of the old story? If it is new, wherein lies its newness? Is there indeed any necessity for a new Gospel? Does the age really stand in need of it? What are the characteristic features that distinguish it from the older Gospels? What is the amount of success which it has achieved and what are its prospects in the future? These are, gentlemen, a few simple questions which, with your kind permission, I purpose to answer this evening in as few words as possible.

My answer to the first question is that the message of the Brahmo Samaj is divine, as divine as the previous ones. It is not a man-made creed, a mere natural religion, better known by the name of deism. It is a communication that comes direct from Heaven for the salvation of the world. Be not startled when I say that it is the Word which the Lord has spoken from His own mouth.

Gentlemen, it is not an easy task to give you in the short space of an hour or so anything like an historical account of the inception and gradual evolution of the faith of the Brahmo Samaj. One thing at least which has a direct bearing on the point in question is very striking. I believe no impartial and unbiassed enquirer of truth will fail to see the hand of God in the movement. To me its brief history of seventy five years is full of divine dealings.

The appearance, at the very outset, of a man of admittedly extraordinary mental powers, of a colossal intellect in an age when all the glory of India, all that was good and great in the Aryan race, had left her—when her world-renowned civilization, her subtle philosophy, a marvel to modern thinkers,

her language, the mother of many tongues, when her divine wisdom treasured in undying scriptures, the records of God's earliest revelation to man, had departed—when, in short, India, the home and cradle of religion, had sunk in grossest idolatry, and the thick mist of ignorance had covered the land from end to end, when all that was left of religion, was the dictate of a most selfish and vicious priesthood, and the blind observance of meaningless ceremonials and pernicious customs,—at such a period of India's degradation the birth of a man of the type of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, whose life-work created a marvellous change in the old order of things, is in itself nothing short of a supernatural event. As the sower sows the seed, Raja Ram Mohan Roy laid the foundation of the new church. Little did he know that the seemingly insignificant movement that he started was the beginning of an universal church, that the light that, like a flash of lightning, illumined his mind, was the light of a mighty dispensation.

For a while, there was a lull. It seemed as if the movement had come to an end. But it was the calm that precedes the tempest. It was the beginning of a storm that was coming, in the shape of a revolution in the religious life and thought of India—an unmistakable sign of the great down-pouring of heavenly grace destined to wash away the dirt and dust of the accumulated error and falsehood of ages and purify the moral and spiritual atmosphere of the world.

Yea, like the gradual formation of the body of an unborn child when it is yet in the mother's womb, the theistic movement was undergoing the slow process of internal evolution. And, while its progress like the unseen growth of a living seed that lies hidden in the bowels of the earth, was almost imperceptible, there came forth the husbandman, the great tiller of the spiritual soil, the noble Aryan Rishi, to nurse the seedling with the waters of transcendental piety. With more than the love of a mother, Maharishi Davendra Nath nurtured the suckling. Those who know any thing of the history of the Brahma Samaj know how faithfully the late Patriarch of the Brahma Samaj fulfilled his divine mission.

The light was the light of a New Dispensation. It was no ordinary child and its birth was an occasion of great rejoicing. In the fulness of time, and, as if in accordance with a pre-ordained, well-matured divine plan, there arose a man of living faith sent by God to be the Minister of this Dispensation. With a tongue touched by the live-coal of

inspiration, he spoke wonderful things. And while he spoke, the world listened. Because he spoke with divine authority. Because he spoke not his own word, but the Word of God. Because he spoke of things that no man had ever spoken before.

Keshub's entire ministry was the ministration of a new gospel. He had no self of his own left in him, since the Holy Ghost had taken a complete possession of him. He was full of the Spirit of Truth. Under his leadership, Brahmoism, hitherto the religion of the intellect, became the religion of life. It was no longer an abstract doctrine, a philosophical idea, a mere compilation or collection of spiritual texts but a religion of harmony in every-day life—the harmony of the soul, the will, the intellect, and the heart,—the harmonious development of various types of virtue—of the knowledge of truth with a righteous living, of duty with love, of asceticism with philanthropic activities, and the realization of God and the deepest—communion with His Spirit in the midst of the most harassing cares of an earthly life.

To Keshub Chunder Sen, his God was not a logical or historical deity, an idea which he borrowed from metaphysics or a narrative from scriptures, but “the ever-living and ever-present Reality,” who was to him “his Father and Mother, Friend and Guide, Teacher and Saviour, Comforter and Gladdener, all in one Person” whom he saw with the eye of faith and whose voice he heard with the ear of conscience. In one of his soul-stirring prayers, which I reproduce in his own inspiring language, the Minister bears a most emphatic testimony to his full faith in God :—

“My greatest joy is this, my God, that Thou hast given me truth, the truth that shall make me free, free from every sin, free from error and free from the misery of the world. I have found the rock of truth, and my heart rejoices in having seen the God of my salvation. Those who waver and are in a sea of uncertainty, those who eat doubt in the morning and swallow scepticism in the evening, and roll on the bed of delusion and dream at night, are indeed miserable. But I thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou hast dispelled my doubts, and revealed unto me the light of Thy gospel with abundant testimony. Blessed be my God. I have seen Thee face to face, and heard Thy Word of Wisdom. Of this I am sure, of this I am absolutely certain, and though I am a vile sinner my faith, dear God, in Thy dispensation knows no doubt and is sunshine without cloud. How happy I am in my faith is known to Thee. Shall I deny it and be a liar? God forbid.

O my heart's Delight, give me yet more faith, and may the joy of trust abound in me!

"In the garden of Elysium I have secured the sweetest and the most beautiful rose. Among birds that sing and are pretty to look at I have selected the prettiest and the most musical. Of precious stones and pearls I have found the most precious, and use them as my necklace. The friend I have chosen is the best and the truest on earth and in heaven. My joy surpasses all joys and pleasures to be found here and in the world above. How fortunate am I, O God. Thy servant is richer than the richest, happier than the happiest. Give me ambrosial odour, Thou heavenly rose. Sing joyful songs, beloved Bird of paradise. Shinerich Necklace, and adorn my neck. Friend, give me comfort and stand by me. Joy of my soul, glory to Thee, now and for ever. Amen."

Such a God-vision in this materialistic age is to me a positive proof of the divine nature of the mission of the Brahma Samaj. Keshub Chunder Sen's life is an endless theme. It is not my object to enter into any details of what the great Minister did. All I need mention here is that his life work has established, beyond any possibility of doubt, the character of the Brahma Samaj as a divine dispensation.

It is scarcely necessary for me to tell you that a religion is hardly worth anything if there is nothing supernatural in it. In order to carry conviction into the minds of those who are slow to accept its claim to divine origin on mere trust, it must do what is beyond human power, it must do what God alone can do and none else. Believe me, like all older churches, the Brahma Samaj too has wrought many miracles. This is no vain boasting. For we take no credit to ourselves. We say it is all the work of the Holy Spirit of God. We have doubtless many workers amongst us, but no one is a wonder worker. They are all very poor and humble men, sinners like you and me.

What then are the miracles which God is working in our midst? Before I venture to answer this question, I beg of you, if you have not a particularly good memory, to make a note most carefully of one important fact. It is that in the Brahma Samaj there is no conflict between religion and science—each one minds its own business. And in this, more than in any thing else, is the surest guarantee, the greatest safeguard against its future degeneration. We do not meddle with the affairs of the healing department, or, for the matter



of that, with those of any other department. We dare not do so. And even if we did, you know what little chance we have of getting admission into it. Pray, do not misunderstand me. I am not ventilating any political grievance. I preach religion pure and simple and not politics. What I mean to say in plain words is that the Brahma Samaj sticks to its own line of work. Whatever its other faults, the present is the age of reason and not of credulous beliefs and superstitions. Science is not so feeble as it was nineteen centuries ago, and it will not therefore allow religion to go out of its province and take undue liberties with it as it did before.

A word about the miracles of Christianity. You have heard of the parables of Christ. Jesus was an Asiatic, and he often made use of metaphorical language. But you know how little he was understood. His earliest disciples, though life-long companions of the great Master, misunderstood him to the last. Perhaps the light of the Spirit of Truth had not yet fully enlightened their minds. Perhaps the Holy Ghost had not yet descended. The Eastern method of expressing spiritual facts of the highest significance in an allegorical language shall always remain a riddle to the West. If it is that wonderful conversion of water into wine—the first miracle of Christ—the converted thing is no other than the liquid hell fire, the greatest of all curses of Western Civilization that have stood seriously in the way of the advancement of Christianity—a miracle which a petty manufacturer of liquor works ten thousand times in his life. If it is the feeding of the five thousand with one loaf, why that loaf is the ordinary bread. Thus the sublimest matter of the spirit is a matter of bread and wine, as if Christ had his whole heart in his stomach, as if the Son of God, whose one great mission was the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on this earth, to whom all earthly treasures were as dust, that he, the great prince of Yogis, was always after loaves and fishes. So even in the deepest spirituality of the Gospel of Christ, our Christian friends smell of spirituous liquor and think of breweries and bakeries! If it is the miraculous birth of the Son of God, that birth is the birth of a material body and the womb that conceived the seed of the Holy Ghost is the womb of a woman. The ascension of the crucified Messiah is nothing more than the ascension of a dead body and the resurrection is the resurrection of a corpse.

Gentlemen, as I have already said, we give unto Cæsar what is due to Cæsar, that is to say, we never encroach on the

province of science. The New Dispensation is, doubtless, a most competent physician. But mind you it is no common doctor come to treat the common diseases of men. It has come with the higher mission to cure maladies of an infinitely more destructive nature than the most fatal and deadliest diseases of the body. It is the healer of the fearful affections of sin and error. It is a New Dispensary where all moral and spiritual diseases are carefully diagnosed and very skilfully treated. I can count to you scores of almost incurable cases of this kind in which the Brahmō Samaj has effected a radical cure. For the treatment of the thousand and one cases of physical derangement or disorder, such as deafness, lameness, lunacy, leprosy, dropsy, palsy, we tell the patients to go straight to the Mayo Hospital without a moment's delay.

The Brahmō Samaj has wrought many a wonder in the spirit world. Let them that have the eye to read the signs of the times, see and believe. To begin with, the Brahmō Samaj, too, has turned water into wine. After all we cannot do without some sort of wine or any other intoxicating substance. Our great ancestors, the chanters of the Vedic hymns, the great poets of nature, could not do without it. At the feast of Cana of Galilee, it is said, they were well drunk. Here in the Brahmō Samaj they were sometimes dead drunk. The example was set by the very Minister of the New Dispensation. He not only drank, but danced too under the effect of that strange wine. I say what I saw. I am an eye-witness. Yea, I myself was caught by the irresistible influence of this dance of the Brahmō Samaj. I too had a taste of the new wine. To me, a mere novice, it was terribly bitter, it seemed as if it had well nigh cut my throat. I thought I was going to lose, or perhaps had almost lost, my head. I am not babbling, I am talking sound sense, although metaphorically. I hope, gentlemen, you will not take me for a common bibler. Unworthy as I am, I am not so foolish as to count myself among the prominent leaders of the Temperance movement, your worthy patrons and presidents. Nevertheless, in so far as the solid work is concerned, I have yet to know if there is any one to whom I yield in my advocacy of that noble cause. You may take me to be what you please, but I have proved myself firm, these thirty years, in my allegiance to what I have known to be true and good for me and for my fellowmen.

In short, gentlemen, I do not mean by the change of water into wine the conversion of God's own clear, wholesome, life-giv-

ing *aqua pura* into what a well known Christian Temperance Reformer calls the *sharrir ab*—the devil's water. It is not the old wine of fury and fierceness, of vengeance or vindictive wrath. Ask Hafiz, ask I say, the commonest composer of doggerel, and he will tell you what wine means. Wine in the East is the emblem of spiritual inebriation. It signifies fiery enthusiasm verging on fanaticism. Intoxicated with the passionate love of truth and full of holy fervour, the divine dispensation of the Brahma Samaj has changed the cold, calculating creed of old—weak as water, faint and half-hearted—into a living faith, into a religion of madness, and has thus given rise to a new era. It is the epoch-making wine of God's infinite love. It is the Baptism of Fire.

The Brahma Samaj too has fed thousands of famished men and women with the bread of life, with that heavenly manna, the Word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord. And they have waxed wonderfully strong in spirit. In the tempestuous sea of an earthly life, with its fearful trials and temptations, it has carried many a shipwrecked sinner, sinking or sunk in the bottomless depths of worldliness, to the haven of salvation. The Brahma Samaj has given new eye of faith, a deep insight into spiritual matters, to many who had been groping in the darkness of ignorance. Yes, it has done greater wonders than these. It has raised to a life of righteousness not a few who had been dead, aye almost stinking in the grave of impurity. This is pre-eminently the Dispensation of the Spirit, and many evil spirits in men cry out and leave their victims the moment they come in contact with the Holy Ghost.

For forty years or more, the apostles and missionaries of the Brahma Samaj have worked as humble instruments in the hand of God for the regeneration of India, from day to day, without any salary or fixed income, taking no thought for the morrow, and depending on the bounty of Heaven alone for their daily bread. If all this that I have said is not a miracle, I do not know what miracle is.

But what is new in all this? Have not such things happened before? I ask you, gentlemen, to kindly hear from me first what I mean by the term "new". When we say ours is a *new* Dispensation, we do not mean by it anything that implies rivalry or antagonism, we mean only a step in advance in the process of religious evolution; a fresh development. Where there is progress, there must be something new. By the word "new", we mean another aspect or phase of the same old Truth, a fuller solution of the great problems of life,

a new interpretation of the eternal Word of God. By the Brahmo Samaj as a *new Church*, we do not mean a rival church set up in opposition to the old time-honored churches of the world. We do not look upon what is old with contempt, as something obsolete and useless. On the contrary, we accept it in a spirit of profound gratefulness and give it all the honour that it deserves. The religion of the Brahmo Samaj is not an enemy but the best and truest of friends, the peace-maker and reconciler of older creeds. Where others see discord and division, confusion and chaos, it finds harmony, a link as it were, connecting all past dispensations. And while others quarrel and exclude each other, the New Dispensation pours oil over the troubled waters and includes all in one harmonious whole.

This idea must necessarily be unintelligible, in as much as it is perfectly new, to those who fancy that every type of goodness is centred in their own sweet selves, who seem to have monopolized the whole of God's wisdom, and thus imagine that theirs is the only true revelation from God, and all others, like so many counterfeit coins, are false and spurious. If our Christian brethren, who are so liberal as to bind up, in one indivisible whole with the New, the old Testament of the Jew, the blood thirsty enemy who nailed their beloved Master to the cross, where is the hitch, I say, in including the Scripture of the mild Hindu in the Book of Life? Where is the logic in the final curse, in praying for plague on those who want to add one type of truth to another? Alas, a revelation, so catholic, so liberal and all-inclusive in the beginning, and yet so narrow, so bigoted, so sectarian in the end!

And what reason have we Hindus to look upon the Gospel of Christ as alien, a Gospel which, in its beatitudes, is in perfect harmony with that which is best and sublimest in our ancient scriptures, when in those very scriptures the most contradictory systems of religion and philosophy occupy places of great honour and prominence? Gentlemen, be a little more liberal. Just imagine what great losses you are suffering by divisions and schisms. If Hindus become strong by uniting with men of their own creed, how great will be the strength in the union of Hindus with Christians, of Christians with Mahommedans and all in one universal brotherhood.

From what I have just said it will be clear to you that we do not believe in the finality of revelation. And neither do we believe that there was only one revelation from God. A complete and perfect revelation in the beginning of creation; the

communication by God of a full knowledge of Himself in the very infancy of the world; the limited mind of man receiving the whole wisdom of Him whom the highest heavens cannot contain—why, gentlemen, a thing like this looks absurd on the very face of it. In believing this, you are betraying your ignorance of the very alphabet of the law of evolution. Progress begins with the lowest rung and not from the top of the ladder. As in the material, so also in the spiritual world, we add to our store of knowledge, little by little, in proportion to our capacity for acquiring it. In looking to the past as your highest ideal, you put the cart before the horse. In one way it is progress no doubt. But it is going backward and not forward. A true revelation is nothing if not progressive. If our God is not a dead or distant deity, an impersonal entity, if He is not a philosophical idea or a theological formula, if indeed He is an ever-living and ever-present God who dwells in the heart even of the least of His children, what wisdom is this, my beloved brethren, to believe that He, the Infinite One, opens His mouth but once in all His endless life, that He spoke but one Word and then lost all power to speak?

If He has spoken once, how preposterous is the idea that He cannot speak again. You may try to shut each other's mouth, though that too is not possible. You may try to crush the liberty of human speech by the enactment of a special law. But surely you cannot curtail the freedom of divine speech. To dare to set limitations to His infinite power of speech—this sort of audacity on the part of mortal men is impious, it is blasphemous. To venture to gag the mouth of God—verily this is a most iniquitous act.

Then, again, the commonest of men among us can speak in more than one tongue. Think you that the Supreme Linguist knew only but one language. If He is a speaking God, and if He did speak to one or more of His children, why, Sir, in Sanscrit alone, why not in Greek, why not in Hebrew, aye why not in Arabic, too; why not to each one in his own native dialect, or better still, in the simplest of all languages—"the language of the heart."

Do not be so unreasonable as to deny to the Omnipotent the power which the least among you possesses in such abundance. You have, each of you, your own individual mouths, your own tongues. And you can speak as many times as you please. You have never heard of men talking through borrowed tongues or hearing with the ears lent to them by kind friends or seeing with the eyes of others. The idea of one

man speaking with the mouth of another is simply ridiculous. And much more so is the idea of God speaking through the mouth of some one else. Was it not His own mouth with which He spoke to the prophets of old? Were they not His own lips that uttered the messages of love and mercy? Have those sacred lips closed for ever? No, brethren, no. The Lord of the Brahma Samaj is neither deaf nor dumb, such a mute and speechless deity is little better than an idol of clay. A stationery, unprogressive revelation, shut up in the pages of one or more books, is like the word that comes out, in a stereotyped form, from that new speaking machine that science has invented. Do not, I beseech you, confound the Word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord, the Living Word of the Law Giver, with the dead letter of the Law? Do not mistake it for pen and paper, do not identify it with man's word or with his flesh or blood.

There is another important point in connection with this subject that deserves consideration. I beg to draw your attention to the two-fold error which believers in the so called revealed books are making. They would not only shut up the mouth of God and declare Him to be utterly helpless to communicate His word of wisdom, except to the favoured few, but they would at the same time stuff the spiritual ears of men as if to render them absolutely incapable of listening directly to the celestial music of His saving gospel. It may, perhaps, be said that as we are great sinners we have lost our spiritual sense of hearing with which nature had originally endowed us. But if this be true, that is to say, if through sin we have ceased to hear the Word of God, what chance, I ask, is left for us to hear the feeble voice of man? You know that the greater the defect in the human ear, the less is the power of hearing, and the greater the need for a more powerful voice. I do not believe that the Word of God is meant for saints only. I would go a step further and say that it is meant more for sinners than for saints.

It may, however, be objected that in claiming a direct revelation from God, we are coveting prophetic honors. Are we not, as bearers of a new divine message, consciously or unconsciously, placing ourselves on an equal position with such exalted personages as the holy Rishis of the Vedas, and with such great prophets as Christ, Mahomet, Moses, Nanak and a host of other sages and saints, who, like so many luminaries, shine in the higher regions of the spirit world. Gentlemen, we mean to do no such thing. Our position is extremely humble. How then, dare we claim to be the messengers of His

Holy Word? The vilest and meanest of sinners as we are according to our own admission, how can we expect the All Holy God to inspire us with His sacred Word? Because our Lord is the Saviour of sinners. Because His redeeming grace makes no distinction between the good and the bad, but descends like rain upon the righteous and the unrighteous alike. Because the door of the merciful Father is wide open to the prodigal child, if only he is penitent and resolves to mend himself. Because the Good Shepherd cares more for the one lost sheep than the ninety-nine that are already in His fold. Because, I say, divine inspiration is not purchased by any human merit, but is the free gift of Heaven and nothing short of the all-conquering grace of God can convert such great sinners as we are. I will make my meaning clear by a simple illustration. Let us suppose we are in the midst of some impenetrable dark forest. Now the thicker the darkness, the stronger must be the light to dispel it. Such indeed is our case. Sin has cast so great a gloom over our lives that no light less than that of the Holy Spirit can remove it. Not that the lesser lights, the great leaders of humanity, have ceased to shed their lustre. But that the darkness in our souls is so profound that complete regeneration is impossible without the light of God's own countenance. Dead as we are in sin, it is His power which can give us new life.

But where is the *necessity* for a new message? In order to answer this question, we must first see what the age needs most. Its highest aspiration and longing is for endless progress, an uninterrupted advancement in every department of human life. Progress is the watchword of the twentieth century. It is the era of keenest competition, its battle cry is quick march. No one is prepared to wait for any body, to halt and thus to be left behind in the race. Everywhere the thirst for knowledge is insatiable. Physical sciences are working wonders. Every scientific discovery is a new revelation. Many there are who see nothing new in all this, and say that the past has done greater wonders. But it is a matter worthy of note that, for obvious reasons, these wise men say all this and much more *after* and not *before* the discovery has been made. They have a fabulous era, almost without a beginning, to refer to, and when pressed for proofs, they are sorry to confess that the historical records of the hoary past have been no exception to the universal law of natural decay. I dare say our friends will lay modern scientists under deep obligation and save them the immense labour lost in minutest researches, if they will have the goodness to give them a complete list, once for all, of all the great wonders of the past.

To be serious, if men who see nothing new in the things that are visible, I mean in such marvellous discoveries in the world of matter, it is idle to expect that they will find anything original or striking in the domain of the spirit, in the things which the eye hath not seen nor hath the ear heard. You have heard of the latest marvel of science, that almost incredible discovery—the wireless telegraphy—which conveys messages not only instantaneously but without any visible medium. Some such discovery has been made by the New Dispensation too. The message of the Brahmō Samaj is a sort of wireless message. The communication from Heaven to earth is immediate and direct, without any medium or mediators, without any of your so-called book revelations. What message, therefore, can be more hopeful, more soul-stirring, more consoling to a sinner than that the Merciful Father Himself is our living scripture? Behold the Gospel of God's self-revelation to the world, the promised dispensation of the Comforter. What greater joy can there be to a sinner than that he has not to go back thousands of years in search for the Word of God, but that He who is above all time and space, is nearest to him, and ever ready to inspire him with His saving truth if only he chooses to lend his ear to Him, and opens the door of his heart to allow Him to establish there His mighty throne.

But why should India, of all the countries in the world, be the birthplace of this Dispensation? Because it is here that the need is very urgent and pressing. India is the most suitable field for the practical application of the idea of a religion of larger union and progressive harmony, such as that of the Brahmō Samaj. We live here as citizens of a world-wide empire, under the benign rule of a most tolerant Government, which observes, with strictest impartiality, the principle of religious neutrality and gives its subjects the full right to the enjoyment of religious liberty. It is in India more than any where else that we have so wide a racial intercourse and so vast an intermingling of nationalities. It is here that almost all the important historical religions have met each other. And as India is admittedly the most religious of all countries, she, in consideration of her past greatness, her deeply devotional character and particularly her exceptional ability to conserve and preserve the truth, has found favour with the Lord to be entrusted with the sacred duty of initiating the formation of a brotherhood on a larger basis, an international religious federation, the union of all religions and all prophets, so that all scriptures be one scripture and all churches be one church, even as our Father in Heaven is one.



The Brahmo Samaj has already laid the foundation of a universal church, the great Parliament of religions. Something has been done in this direction but infinitely much more remains yet to be done. The reign of our late Empress-Mother in India was the reign of continuous all-round progress. And I make bold to say that much of the advancement in religious, moral, social and political matters has been the direct or indirect work of the Brahmo Samaj. If you care to read the history of the Brahmo Samaj, you will find that our Church took, and is still taking, a leading part in the initiation of every manner of wholesome reform,—in the establishment of spiritual worship in this land of idolatry, in the eradication of religious and social evils too numerous to mention in detail, in the elevation of the status of woman, in the cause of purity and temperance, in opening and maintaining schools and colleges, in starting newspapers, in raising the moral tone of the people by the creation of a healthy public opinion,—in these and many other things, the Brahmo Samaj has been the pioneer indigenous movement in India. Such has been the past of our Church.

As to the future of the Brahmo Samaj, we have no reason to despair. Though mutual animosities, unbrotherliness and sectarian hatred divide mankind, the cause of the Brahmo Samaj, which is the cause of universal peace and goodwill, must triumph in the end. To me, our prospects in the future are as bright as ever, if only we are alive to the high responsibilities that rest on our shoulders. Let each one of us be true to his own mission. Let us realize the dignity of our position and rise to the full stature of our manhood. My brethren of the Brahmo Samaj, remember that you are the messengers of a new gospel, the ministers of a great Dispensation. Great are the prerogatives of the disciples of the world's acknowledged prophets and religious teachers. To be counted among the followers of Christ, Buddha, Mahomed and the renowned Rishis and Munis of India is a great honor indeed. But yours are more serious responsibilities. You profess to be the disciples of One who is infinitely greater than the greatest of all earthly teachers, of the Almighty God Himself. Be worthy of your Heavenly Master, the Guru of all gurus. Let your lives show that you are real followers of the One True God.

We Punjabees have the proud privilege to belong to a martial race. You all have heard of that singular method—considerably laughed at in these days—of counting numbers which our great warrior-prophet taught us through precept as

well as by personal example. His *one*, you know, was equal to a *lac* and a *quarter more*. But I need not remind you that this tremendous power of the unit is in unity. Let us, therefore, unite and garner up all our strength to wage a ceaseless war, to fight a true fight, with the deadliest of all our foes, I mean our individual carnal selves, our animal propensities, our unbelief, our practical atheism. Instead of wasting our energies in worldly warfare, in hair-splitting controversies, in sectarian quarrels, let us make a common cause to vanquish these our common enemies. Let all of us, Hindus, Christians, Muhammdans, and others join in this holy crusade. Great, indeed, have been our failures in the past, but let those shortcomings be our lessons for the future.

Beloved brethren of the Puaji's Brahma Samaj, our anniversary has come to an end. We are now at the threshold of another year. May it be, by the grace of God, a year of genuine prayerfulness, of deeper devotions, of fuller faith, of greater enthusiasm, of more heroic self-control, and of larger sacrifices for philanthropic work. May it be a year of more abiding peace and closer fellowship in our own little church, and of broader relations and wider sympathies with the great time-honored churches of the world. May Heaven's choicest blessings be upon each and all of you.

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